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Tariff turmoil: How advisors can stay on top of huge market swings
By Brian Wallheimer
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For days, markets turned south as President Trump's tariffs led to concerns about higher prices and global trade wars. Now, the president has paused and lowered some of his tariffs, adding to the turmoil on Wall Street, albeit in a positive direction this time.

Financial advisors are often telling clients to stay the course and consider investments in the long term. But the whiplash of the past few months is a lot to handle.

We've pulled together some of our latest stories on how advisors can handle both the investment implications of the tariff turmoil, as well as client fears and concerns.

Scroll down to see our coverage, and keep up to date with all our tariff coverage here on our site.

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Advisor survey shows confidence at all-time low
Amid policy uncertainty and market volatility, financial advisors' confidence levels sank to new lows this month.

That's the overall sentiment reflected in the April Financial Advisor Confidence Outlook (FACO), a survey of financial advisors and planners by Financial Planning. After last year's elections, advisors' overall confidence bounced upward, reaching all the way to a score of 24 in December 2024. But those gains were short-lived, dropping to a staggering minus-16 by March.

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Lessons from past financial crises
After President Donald Trump announced his "Liberation Day" reciprocal tariffs, the stock market took a massive nosedive. For advisors who have been in the business for some time — and lived through events like the dot-com boom and bust of the late 1990s, the early 2000s recession, the 2008 financial crisis or the 2020 COVID-19 shutdown — much about recent events feels familiar.

Veterans of the wealth management industry say the tariff turmoil may feel unprecedented to clients, but there are hard-won lessons to be learned from

previous crises.

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How to get ahead of jittery clients
Advisors say they often react to a single-digit-percentage-point market drop with a "hand-holding email," which has been preapproved and renewed bi-annually by its compliance department. Experts view such prewritten communications as best practices for any firm.

This story ran last fall during another market downturn, but its lessons are still pertinent today.

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New bond products as a haven
With investors searching for safety in bonds from tumbling equity values, some fixed-income managers argue that active products provide better tax savings than passive funds.

Stock prices have been falling substantially every day since President Donald Trump's announcement of tariffs, but global government bonds are staging a rally. As a traditional haven from equity volatility that is likely to get even more attractive if the Fed cuts interest rates to kick-start economic growth, fixed-income assets such as municipal bonds also carry tax benefits. But more asset managers are making the case that actively managed exchange-traded funds can tap into higher after-tax yields than passive products.

READ MORE: Active bond managers tout after-tax returns amid stocks' tariff tumble

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Advising among massive political polarization
Financial advisors often advise keeping politics out of a portfolio, but do clients heed their warnings?

A flood of new tariff policies from the Trump administration has sent shockwaves through the stock market. Advisors say that individual reactions, often dependent on their political views, can vary wildly from one client to another.

READ MORE: Advisors navigate a political divide in client outlooks

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Assessing strategies in the age of tariffs
After last week's announcement from President Trump of reciprocal tariffs, it didn't take long for markets to respond.

The sharp decline triggered plenty of calls from worried clients to advisors, who began analyzing the possible impacts of the new tariffs, with some staying the course for the time being and others already adjusting.

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